

# Michigan Regional Skills Alliances®



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## Newsletter 3: Spring 2008

**Dear MiRSA Partners and Conveners:**

**I would like to start by thanking all of you for the hard work and dedication all of you have to the Michigan Regional Skills Alliances initiative. Working with the initiative has been a wonderful experience for me filled with great memories, colleagues, and friends.**

**Therefore it is with mixed emotions that I have decided to retire effective March 1, 2008 after nearly 41 years in state government. During my time with the state, I have seen Michigan become a leader in workforce development and I know that you will continue to keep Michigan on the forefront.**

**I have been with the Bureau of Workforce Programs since its inception and it is going to be different not coming to work in the Victor Building everyday. However, I am looking very forward to new experiences, and I have planned a trip to Italy for this May. I am excited to be able to take some time to myself and with family and friends.**

**You have all been wonderful partners to the Michigan Regional Skills Alliances initiative and I wish you all the best in the future.**

**Sincerely,**

**Vicki Enright, Interim Deputy Director  
Bureau of Workforce Programs**

## Upcoming Events:

### February:

- 29<sup>th</sup> – March 1<sup>st</sup>: Michigan Organic Conference (Kellogg Center, East Lansing)

### March:

- 13<sup>th</sup> – 2008 MiRSA RFP due

- 25<sup>th</sup>: MiRSA Hospitality Webinar

- 25<sup>th</sup> - 26<sup>th</sup>: Business Solutions Training (Marriott Hotel, East Lansing)

### April:

- 6<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup>: 2008 Heartland Professional Development Symposium (St. Louis, Missouri)

- 7<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup>: The Performance Institute's 2008 National Healthcare Workforce Development Summit (Arlington, VA)\

- 11<sup>th</sup>: Design and Manufacturing Alliance (DMA) Spring Conference (Auburn Hills Campus of Oakland Community College)

- 12<sup>th</sup>- 13<sup>th</sup>: United For Sight Fifth Annual International Health & Development Conference (Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut)

- 15<sup>th</sup>: MiRSA Manufacturing Forum (LCC, West Campus)

- 14<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup>: SAE International 2008 World Congress (Cobo Center, Detroit)

- 15<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup>: The Michigan Construction Career Days 2008 (Ingham County Fairgrounds)

- 17<sup>th</sup>: Michigan Community College Day (Lansing)

- 21<sup>st</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup>: Business Solutions Training (Marriott Hotel, East Lansing)

- 23<sup>rd</sup>: Synergy's 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Commercial Real Estate Conference (Breslin Center, Lansing)

## *Bureau of Workforce Transformation*

Keith W. Cooley, Director of the Michigan Department of Labor & Economic Growth, along with other members of the executive office has announced a new integrated Bureau of Workforce Transformation. This new bureau will be a combination of the Bureau of Workforce Programs, which the Regional Skills Alliances are currently a part of, and the Bureau of Career Education Programs.

The creation of the Bureau of Workforce Transformation is the most significant change in the structure of Michigan's workforce programs that has been seen in 15 years. Our new bureau will focus on our two most significant customers, workers and employers; with a focus on lifelong learning.

The Bureau will have a division, Regional and Sector Strategies of which MiRSAs will be a part. The Regional Skills Alliances staff is very excited about these upcoming changes since the MiRSAs will play a large role in Michigan's Regional and Sector Strategies. Although, particulars still need to be resolved, we have set a target of April 1<sup>st</sup> as the effective date. We are looking forward to these changes and see it as a positive move for Michigan.

We will pass along any information as we receive it and be sure to check the [www.Michigan.gov](http://www.Michigan.gov) website for information as it becomes available to the public.



## ***MiRSA Staff Retires*** **Timmons Receives Wonderful Holiday Gift: RETIREMENT!**

Gwen Timmons ended her 29-year career in state government by retiring December 29, 2007. She has spent the last four years as an Economic Development Specialist with the Department of Labor & Economic Growth/ Bureau of Workforce Programs, Michigan Regional Skills Alliances.

Gwen began her career with the State of Michigan in April of 1972 working as an Employment Service Interviewer with the Michigan Employment Services Commission. Throughout her 29 years, she has served in many different departments including Michigan Rehabilitation Services, Michigan Jobs Commission, Michigan Economic Development Corporation, and finally Michigan Regional Skills Alliances.

Gwen and her husband Jim have two children, Court and Keely and reside in Marquette, Michigan. Although she has retired from state government, she is not ready to relax just yet. Gwen has taken a position with Northern Michigan University as the Coordinator of Workforce Development and Training in Marquette, Michigan.

### **Congratulations Gwen!**



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## ***MiRSA 2008 Request for Proposal***

The Michigan Department of Labor & Economic Growth is now accepting applications to establish additional Michigan Regional Skills Alliances (MiRSAs). In addition, existing MiRSAs may also apply for an expansion. We realize that employers of existing MiRSAs may identify the need to broaden current MiRSA activities as employers identify other workforce issues, or the need to expand the geographic region of an industry sector. Specific expansion criteria has been set forth in the application.

MiRSAs are employer driven, business and community partnerships, focusing on addressing workforce issues in an industry sector. They are locally managed partnerships formed to address workforce issues affecting firms operating in an industry in a distinct geographic area. MiRSAs set out to resolve worker issues such as worker shortages, skill shortages, training mismatches, employee recruitment and retention, and organizational design. State funding must be used within the first two years of the MiRSA contract and cannot be carried over into the third year.

Applicants can be any organization selected by the partners to submit the application on behalf of the others. The applicant will serve as the fiduciary responsible for proper use of funding sources. The applicant must also identify a convener organization. The convener is the champion organizer of the MiRSA and is a key player in the community with a role of solving

workforce needs of the industry within the targeted region. The convener will serve as the main contact.

For additional information and application materials please visit [www.michigan.gov/rsa](http://www.michigan.gov/rsa) or email [RSA@Michigan.gov](mailto:RSA@Michigan.gov). The Department of Labor & Economic Growth must receive completed applications no later than 5 p.m. on Thursday March 13, 2008.

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***Featured MiRSA:***  
***Where Hospitality Works! Southeast Michigan Hospitality and Tourism MiRSA***

The Michigan Regional Skills Alliance, Where Hospitality Works!, which is convened by the Washtenaw County Employment Training and Community Services Michigan Works! and the Livingston County Michigan Works! Agency has created a specialized training tool for the employers in the Southeast Michigan Region that will place them in a league above the rest!

Where Hospitality Works! was created in 2005 with the goal of addressing critical training and employment needs in the hospitality and tourism industry of Southeast Michigan. They identified key workforce issues in their area that they wanted to address including: promoting careers in the hospitality and tourism sector to high school and college students, helping people identify opportunities for jobs, offering educational and training resources, creating advanced educational opportunities by working with colleges and other area training institutions, encouraging Michigan Works! Agencies to work together to reach out to industry

employers, and to partner with tourism and economic development initiatives to promote the region.

Many of the employers in the southeast Michigan area are larger employers that have international clients, and therefore knew that it was important to design training that would benefit their specific niche. The MiRSA is currently presenting a series of workshops by Izumi Suzuki, of Suzuki Meyers and Associates called "How to Treat the Japanese Business Customer." The MiRSA thought it was an important business tactic to understand these customers and things about their individual culture. The goal is to make the customers feel more comfortable and valued. The idea originally came from the Ann Arbor Convention Bureau because they had a lot of employers with Japanese customers. The MiRSA plans to continue this class because they see a growing market for this specialized training because of the many automotive and information technology companies in the Detroit Metro and Ann Arbor region that do business internationally.

The first training took place in November 2007 and had 49 attendees. The overall comments from the session from the participants were that it was very informative and they enjoyed it. One comment from a participant stated, "Great Opportunity to learn respect for another culture and promote the attributes of Detroit." Another training took place on January 21<sup>st</sup> at the Marriott Ypsilanti at Eagle Crest and was sponsored by Toyota. Sixty industry members attended.

For more information about the training or general information about the Where

Hospitality Work! MiRSA, visit their website at:

<http://www.wherhospitalityworks.org/index.php> or contact Jane Bertsch, MiRSA Project Manager, at [Bertsch@wherehospitalityworks.org](mailto:Bertsch@wherehospitalityworks.org).



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### ***MiRSA Hospitality Webinar***

The Bureau of Workforce Programs, Regional Skills Alliances, is hosting an informational webinar entitled *Hospitality Promising Practices*. The webinar is scheduled for March 25, 2008, from 1:30 pm to 3:00 pm. Three of our current hospitality and tourism MiRSAs will be presenting information about what they are currently doing in the industry. Information will be presented from Sunrise Side Hospitality Industry Coalition's Training Program, which covers customer service basics. Thumb Area Agri-Business 2100 will be presenting an overview of the Agri Tourism industry. Also, the Where Hospitality Works! MiRSA will present their Ambassador Hospitality Training and How to Attract the Japanese Business Customers. We hope that all of you will take this opportunity to hear information and ask questions about this growing industry in Michigan.

Additional information and login instructions will be sent through email and also posted on the MiRSA Website when it becomes available.

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### ***MiRSA Manufacturing Forum***

The Regional Skills Alliances staff will conduct a Manufacturing Forum on April 15 for all of the Manufacturing MiRSAs and their partners. It will be a great opportunity to share each other's successes as well and getting ideas and networking.

In addition there will be a keynote presentation from Dr. Charles Ballard, Professor of Economics from Michigan State University. Dr. Ballard has been on the faculty at MSU since 1982, when he received his Ph.D. from Stanford University. In 2007, he became Director of the State of the State Survey, in MSU's Institute for Public Policy and Research. He has also served as a consultant with the U.S Departments of Agriculture, Health & Human Services, and Treasury.

Dr. Ballard will be discussing the future of manufacturing and what manufacturing employers and other industry partners should know about Michigan's Economy and the industry.

If you have any questions or would like additional information, please contact Ms. Sue Schaible at (517) 335-3325 or email [RSA@Michigan.gov](mailto:RSA@Michigan.gov). In the coming weeks there will be information posted to our website for registration

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### **For additional information please contact:**

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